

C-O-P-1

SECRET

Subject: KUEPPERS Wilhelm Benedikt

Report No. : PIR-6805

Place Acquired: Italy, Rome

Date of Info : 14 April 1950

Evaluation : B-3

Date Acquired : End April 1950

Source : L 3

Date of Report: 21 June 1950

1. Personal data:

Name : KUEPPERS Wilhelm Benedikt
Father: Benedikt (deceased)
Mother: Maria KUEPPERS (deceased)
Born : 17 February 1910 at Muenchen-Gradbach

2. Subject came to the German-Hungarian pontifical College in Rome on 28 October 1933 and enrolled as a student in theology. In 1941 he renewed enrollment in the college. As German citizen, in April 1941 he was called to arms. According to German military regulations, he was declared unfit for nomination as a military chaplain because of his age. As a consequence he was entrusted with the functions of interpreter of Italian. With these functions he served with the Commissariat unit in Africa and in Italy until April 1944 at which time he deserted because his conscience as a Catholic priest did not permit him to coerce Italian civilians to forced labor nor to arrest Italians wanted by the Germans. He was deferred to a Court Martial and sentenced to death in absentia for desertion.

3. During the period, while in hiding, he established contacts with the British Captain HOOD of the BIS who as soon as the Allies arrived in Rome, advised him to have himself captured. Thus he was transferred to the Cinecitta PW camp from where on 9 November 1944 he escaped, inasmuch as in the camp were detained officers of the SS and Subject was forced to escape from their treatment. He then returned to the Vatican informing the Allied authorities and continued his studies allegedly upon the verbal authorization of one LEAHY, a CIC agent.

4. On 7 November 1945 he was arrested by the Allied police and successively informed that he was to be tried by a commission of a PW camp prior to obtaining a definite release. A large part of the above information was furnished by the Allied Commission to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a note dated 7 June 1946 in which it was recommended to the Italian authorities that Subject be issued a sojourn permit for an undetermined period in order to continue his studies.

5. Subject boasted of strong support in the Vatican and of Allied authorities among whom were Col. SWITZER of the American Embassy, and Major BATTERSBY and the Navy Commander, SCHROEDER. During the period between his escape from

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Cinecitta camp and his arrest, Subject lived at the Teutonico College on Via della Sacrestia 17, Rome (Vatican City). Liberated from the Pisa concentration camp, he was issued in Rome a sojourn permit dated 14 November 1946 and took lodgings at Via delle Carrozze 23. In January 1947 the Ministry of the Interior ordered his internment in a concentration camp. At that time however, Subject was in Venice and the Venice Questura sent him to the Fossoli camp.

6. Subject instead of going to Fossoli, returned to Rome and pleaded with the P.S. authorities, in order to depart for a brief period for Germany. Instead he obtained from the Ministry of Interior a sojourn permit to stay in Rome until he could be repatriated. The Ministry ordered that he was to leave for Bolzano on 14 February 1947 with a train of German repatriates. On 12 February 1947 he was issued a travel permit for Bolzano.

7. Subject was object of a search circular of the Bolzano Questura dated 13 March 1947 because he had left the German repatriation camp where he arrived on 28 February. Arrested by the Bolzano Questura on 27 March 1948 he was transferred to the Farfa Sabina camp. In July 1948 he obtained from the Ministry of Interior a 15 day pass to go to Rome where he arrived on 17 August 1948 and took lodgings at Via Bixio 90.

8. On the intervention of Captain TADDEI of the Italian Navy C.E., he obtained several extensions of his sojourn permit until 15 October 1948. Following additional interventions by Navy C.E. Subject obtained another extension until 15 December 1948. In January 1949 the Ministry authorized the extension of the permit until 20 April 1949.

9. Since Subject had not been traced after this date, a search was instituted for Subject. This search was terminated following a new Ministry authorization dated 26 June 1949 which extended Subject's sojourn permit until 31 December 1949. As of 21 July 1949 Subject lived at Via Pirico 13.

10. In February 1950 Subject submitted a request for a sojourn permit for an undetermined period supported by Carabinieri Major Giuseppe SCORDINO aide to Major PONTANI of the C.E. Nucleus of Italian Navy intelligence. Subject stated in the request that on 25 October 1949 he had married the Italian citizen, Luisa Vittoria CHERARDI, daughter of Carabinieri Colonel, Giuseppe GHERARDI and that he employed as correspondent for foreign languages by the UTECOM Society, Via Veneto 96.

11. During this period Subject served with the Military Police of the Navy service with whom he is evidently still in contact in regard to secret investigations on foreigners in Rome. On 23 March 1950 Subject was issued a sojourn permit for an undetermined period. Until about two months ago he lived at Via Tommaso Salvini 25, Apt. 6, which he left for an unknown destination with his wife. Subject speaks four languages well and has a degree in Letters and Philosophy.

12. []Traces: Subject, as Wilhelm KUEPPERS, was the subject of CIC investigations throughout 1945 as an escaped German PW.

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